

AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the pending sequence listing with the enclosed replacement sequence listing.

Please replace paragraph [0043] with the following amended paragraph:

--"NT-proBNP" or "BNP" refers to cardiac derived peptide hormone that circulates in the blood and exerts potent cardiovascular and renal actions. Mature hBNP consists of a 32 amino acid peptide containing a 17 amino acid ring structure formed by two disulfide bonds having the amino acid sequence HPLGSPGSASDLETSGLQEQRNHLQGKLSELQ (SEQ ID NO: 4).--

Please replace paragraph [0087] with the following amended paragraph:

--The assay for N-terminal proBNP was based on the non-competitive N-terminal proBNP assay described by Karl, et al, Scand J Clin Lab Invest Suppl 1999; 230:177-181. Rabbit polyclonal antibodies were raised to the N-terminal (amino acids 1-12) and C-terminal (amino acids 65-76) of the human N-terminal proBNP having the amino acid sequence VEQTSLEPLQESPRPTGVWKSREVATEGIRGHRKMVLYTLRAPRSPKMVQSGSGCFGRKMDRISSSSGLGCKVLRH (SEQ ID NO: 5). IgG from the sera was purified on protein A sepharose columns. The C-terminal directed antibody (0.5 .mu.g in 100 .mu.L for each ELISA plate well) served as the capture antibody. The N-terminal antibody was affinity purified and biotinylated. Aliquots (20 .mu.L) of samples or N-BNP standards were incubated in the C-terminal antibody coated wells with the biotinylated antibody for 24 hours at 4.degree. C. Following washes, streptavidin labeled with methyl-acridinium ester (streptavidin-MAE, 5.times.10.sup.6 relative light units/ml) (Ng et al, Clinical Science 2002; 102: 411-416) was added to each well. Plates were read on a Dynatech MLX Luminometer as previously described (Ng et al, Clinical Science 2002; 102: 411-416). The lower limit of detection was 5.7 fmol/ml of unextracted plasma. Within and between assay coefficients of variation were acceptable at 2.3% and 4.8% respectively. There was no cross-reactivity with ANP, BNP or CNP.--